

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 6947

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: IR PINR SHUM
SUBJ: RESURGENCE IN RASTAKHIZ PARTY ACTIVITIES

REF: TEHRAN 6636

1. DURING THE PAST 2 WEEKS THERE HAS BEEN INCREASED
ACTIVITY ON THE PART OF THE RASTAKHIZ PARTY LEADERSHIP
BEGINNING WITH CONSTRUCTIVE WING LEADER HUSHANG ANSARY'S
PRESS INTERVIEW ON JULY 25 (REFTEL). FOLLOWING THE ANSARY
STATEMENT, PROGRESSIVE WING COORDINATOR ABDOLMAJID MAJIDI
(WHO IS ALSO MINISTER OF STATE AND DIRECTOR OF THE PLAN
AND BUDGET ORGANIZATION) DISCUSSED HIS WING'S PHILOSOPHY
IN SEVERAL RECENT INTERVIEWS WITH THE LOCAL PRESS.

THAT WING HAS DEVELOPED A 6 POINT "PLATFORM" ENCOMPASSING
THE FOLLOWING AREAS: EQUALITY UNDER LAW; PRODUCTIVITY AND
EFFICIENCY; DECENTRALIZATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE; ENVIRONMENT; CONCERNS OF YOUTH;
AND OIL INCOME SUBSTITUTION.

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2. MAJIDI HAS EMPHASIZED PARTICULARLY THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL AFFAIRS, NOTING THAT PEOPLE
"MUST BE KEPT INFORMED OF REALITIES, AND WE MUST PUT THE
FACTS AND FIGURES AT THEIR DISPOSAL". AS DID ANSARY EARLIER,
MAJIDI, ON AUG 3, SUPPORTED FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AS
"AN INDISPUTABLE RIGHT OF ALL IRANIANS". HE ADDED THAT
"THE GOVERNMENT MUST ALWAYS GUARD AGAINST THE VIOLATION OF

THESE PRINCIPLES, DUE TO RED TAPE, BY THE VERY OFFICIALS CHARGED WITH CARRYING THEM OUT."

3. MAJIDI, ASKED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TO CHARACTERIZE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PARTY'S TWO WINGS, HAS COMMENTED THAT HIS RESPONSE WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT FORMULATION OF MORE PRECISE CONSTRUCTIVE WING POLICIES. WHEN ASKED AUG 3 IF THE TWO WINGS WOULD BE REPRESENTED BY SEPARATE FACTIONS IN THE MAJLES, PROGRESSIVE COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEMBER DEPUTY HALAKU RAMBOD SAID THAT THE QUESTION WAS INITIALLY CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED SINCE THE TWO WINGS AIM TO REINFORCE PARTY SOLIDARITY AND WOULD NOT, THEREFORE, TAKE SPECIFIC STANDS IN THE MAJLES. FOR HIS PART, ANSARY ON JULY 27 SAID THAT HE FORESAW NO "CONFRONTATION" IN VIEWS BETWEEN THE TWO WINGS.

4. APART FROM THESE PUBLIC APPEARANCES BY PARTY LEADERS, THERE HAS BEEN INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN EACH WING DURING THE PAST FEW WEEKS. THE COORDINATING COMITE OF THE PROGRESSIVE WING HELD ITS FIRST MEETING ON JULY 27 AT WHICH DISCUSSION CENTERED ON A PROGRAM OF ACTION FOR THE WING'S WORKING GROUPS AND PROVINCIAL COMITES AND A PLAN FOR MEETINGS WITH THE PRESS OVER THE NEXT 6 WEEKS. ON THE SAME DAY ANSARY ANNOUNCED THAT THE CONSTRUCTIVE WING WOULD ALSO FORM WORKING GROUPS WHICH WILL EXAMINE IRAN'S POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND INTERNATIONAL

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POLICIES. PRESUMABLY OUT OF THESE GROUPS WILL EMERGE THE CONSTRUCTIVE WING'S "PLATFORM".

5. COMMENT: THESE PRONOUNCEMENTS CONTINUE THE CURRENT GOI PUBLIC CAMPAIGN OF SUPPORTING FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION ALBEIT WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF "CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM". AT THE SAME TIME, THE RASTAKHIZ PARTY APPEARS TO BE ENTERING A NEW PHASE OF INCREASED ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITY. IF PRESENT TREND CONTINUES, WE CAN EXPECT GREATER FOCUS ON WING ACTIVITIES AND THE EXPOSITION OF TWO SEPARATE, BUT COMPATIBLE, WING PLATFORMS OR APPROACHES TO SPECIFIC ISSUES. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE WING ORGANIZATIONAL CONCEPT HAS NOT YET RECEIVED SUCH EXTENSIVE PARTY ATTENTION AS TO CATCH THE PUBLIC IMAGINATION. A REFLECTION OF PUBLIC ATTITUDE WAS RECENT INTERVIEW IN LOCAL PRESS WITH ONE DR SEPEHR ZABIH, IDENTIFIED ONLY AS AN "IRANIAN RESEARCH SCHOLAR AT UC, BERKELEY," WHO STATED: "IT IS NOT CLEAR TO ME WHY THESE TWO WINGS SHOULD BE ACTIVE FOR A WHILE AND THEN LAPSE INTO NON-ACTIVITY. I DO NOT UNDERSTAND THEIR PAST ROLES IN SOCIETY AND I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THEIR ROLES WILL BE IN THE FUTURE." OBVIOUSLY GREATER EFFORTS BY THE PARTY ARE REQUIRED IF RASTAKHIZ PHILOSOPHY IS TO EXTEND BEYOND A VERY

LIMITED CIRCLE OF GOVT LEADERS.
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